

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6563

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Judiciary, February 08, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to a grant program for neighborhood organizations to support community safety activities.

**Brief Description:** Creating a grant program for neighborhood organizations.

**Sponsors:** Senators Honeyford, Swecker, Delvin and Stevens.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Judiciary: 2/08/08 [DPS, DNP, w/oRec].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6563 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Kline, Chair; McCaslin, Ranking Minority Member; Carrell, Hargrove, McDermott and Weinstein.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Tom, Vice Chair.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Roach.

**Staff:** Dawn Noel (786-7472)

**Background:** Multiple organizations exist throughout Washington that work to promote community safety and prevent crime. Some of these groups are known as "neighborhood watch" or "block watch" organizations, which in their simplest form consist of neighbors who know each other and watch for and report to local law enforcement criminal activity in their areas. Other activities include holding informational meetings; documenting and removing graffiti; creating and distributing a "phone tree" or directory of neighbors' names, addresses, and phone numbers; writing and distributing newsletters and holding classes to educate individuals on crime prevention and safety.

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute):** Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, a competitive grant program is established in the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to encourage communities to develop coordinated

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strategies to reduce crime and promote safety. CTED must make awards, subject to funding, under certain terms. These terms require that a grant applicant must:

- provide evidence that it is a non-profit entity;
- describe the area to be served;
- include a needs assessment describing the impact of crime in the area;
- explain the crime prevention and safety strategy and implementation plan; and
- provide evidence of additional resources committed to the strategy totaling at least 25 percent of funds awarded, which may consist of in-kind contributions.

Activities that may be funded include, but are not limited to activities that: (1) build community among neighbors, local organizations, including law enforcement, local government, and non-profit organizations; (2) promote awareness of programs for which funding is sought; (3) educate individuals on crime prevention and safety; (4) and create and build on existing community programs, coordinate their efforts, and/or develop other cooperative efforts to make the most effective use of resources.

CTED must select recipients no later than December 1, 2008. CTED may select new recipients every two years thereafter.

CTED is authorized to collect data and other information necessary to monitor the recipients funded, to determine whether the recipient is making progress towards benchmarks specified in its original application.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) must evaluate the extent of: (1) monitoring CTED has made for each grant recipient's activities; and (2) progress each grant recipient is making in reaching its benchmarks. JLARC is authorized to require CTED and grant recipients to submit data and other information necessary to make these determinations. JLARC may contract with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy for appropriate portions of the evaluation.

JLARC must report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature no later than August 30, 2010, and August 30, 2012, and every two years thereafter as determined by the Legislature in its operating budget. CTED must consider JLARC's evaluation of future applications by evaluated entities and for projects similar to evaluated projects.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute):** Clarifies that establishment of the grant program is subject to availability of funds appropriated for this purpose. Extends the date by which CTED must select grant recipients from October 1, 2008 to December 1, 2008. Clarifies in the intent section that this is an ongoing grant program. In the portion of the bill permitting the selection of new recipients in future biennia, the ongoing nature of the grant program is further clarified by removing language stating that this future selection of new recipients is subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this purpose. Reduces the requested appropriation from \$500,000 to \$48,000.

**Appropriation:** \$48,000.

**Fiscal Note:** Available in part.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill:** PRO: There are several neighborhood block watch organizations in our area that could have increased effectiveness with additional funding. Community involvement is a major part of crime solving, and it shows criminals that people are watching out for them. A person should be able to have a safe environment where they live. Our block watch organization needs funds for block watch signs and educational classes. This bill is not about firearm purchases.

OTHER: We are in support of this bill. However, the substitute bill does not provide enough money for firearms, holsters, and firearm safety strategy courses.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Honeyford, prime sponsor; John Snaza, Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

OTHER: Robert Hill, citizen.